

# AMT Media Release

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### National Massage Therapy Awareness Week (NMTAW) 2015: How to choose a good massage therapist

Just about everyone loves a good massage: massage feels good and studies show it benefits your health. For example, research has found that massage therapy can reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure and ameliorate low back pain.

While massage has many health benefits, a good therapist is vital to your treatment.

September 7-13 is National Massage Therapy Awareness Week (NMTAW). To celebrate, the Association of Massage Therapists (AMT) shares its tips for how to choose a good massage therapist.

According to AMT president Annette Cassar, the first step when choosing a therapist is to check for professional qualifications.

"There are three main levels of massage therapy qualification: Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma," Ms Cassar said.

"Graduates of Certificate IV programs perform general health maintenance treatments such as relaxation massage. Diploma graduates can treat common musculoskeletal presentations such as low back pain, headache, neck and shoulder pain. And Advanced Diploma graduates can treat complex musculoskeletal presentations with a more extensive range of treatment protocols."

According to Ms Cassar, you'll also need to check whether your therapist is a health fund provider if you want to claim your treatment through a private fund.

"If you have extras cover for remedial massage, it is important to check with your therapist about their provider status. Generally, Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualified therapists will fulfil the requirements to operate as health fund providers."

Most importantly, according to Ms Cassar, your therapist should be a member of a professional association.

"Choosing a massage therapist who is a member of a professional association is an important safeguard in terms of professionalism and standards. Members of AMT are committed to upholding the highest quality of standards in the field of massage therapy," Ms Cassar said. "They are bound by the AMT Code of Ethics and Code of Practice, a benchmark set of standards for the safe and ethical practice of massage therapy."

"Massage is a patient-centred therapy. Your massage therapist should discuss your treatment plan with you and establish goals. However, you are in control of the treatment at all times and you should expect to be treated with respect, courtesy and dignity," Ms Cassar said.

To find an AMT-accredited therapist in your local area, go to

<http://www.amt.org.au/find-a-therapist/search-by-postcode.html>

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